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PITNEY BOWES INC. 35 WATERVIEW DRIVE P.O. BOX 3000 MSC 26-22 SHELTON, CT 06484-8000			NASH, LASHANYA RENEE	
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			2153	
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/017,242	QUINE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	LaShanya R Nash	2153	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 December 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 12-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 10 and 11 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some    \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                        | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)               | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/12/2002</u> .   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-22 are pending.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

**Claims 1,7,9, and 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Tsuki et al. (6,5557,045), hereinafter referred to as Tsuki.**

In reference to claim 1, Tsuki explicitly discloses a method for determining the format of an email address based on an corresponding domain name, in order to prevent erroneous input occurrences of email addresses (abstract; column 2, lines 3-5; and Figures 2-4). Tsuki further discloses:

- A method (column 3, lines 49-50 and Figure 3) for determining an e-mail address formatting rule (i.e. predefined e-mail address segment, Figure 8) corresponding to a domain name (i.e. top domain name, Figure 8), (column 1, line 39 to column 2, line 28), the method comprising:

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- Gathering e-mail address data (i.e. character string/email address, Figure 4) corresponding to the domain name, (column 2, lines 16-28; column 3, lines 50-67; Figure 3-items 301-302);
- Determining the e-mail address formatting rule (column 7, lines 7-40) based on the gathered e-mail address data, (column 4, line 1 to column 5, line 39 and Figure 3-items 304-311); and
- Electronically storing (i.e. RAM, Figure 1-item 106) an association of the e-mail address formatting rule with the domain name, (column 5, lines 40-56, Figure 3-item 312).

In reference to claim 7, Tsuki further discloses the method wherein the e-mail address data comprises a first e-mail address data (i.e. character string/email address, Figure 4), and the step of determining the e-mail address formatting rule further comprises: parsing a domain portion (i.e. top domain name, Figure 4) of the first e-mail address, (column 4, lines 1-42); parsing an identifier portion (i.e. sub-address, Figure 4) of the first e-mail address, (column 4, line 44 to column 5, lines 21); and determining whether the identifier portion is consistent with one or more known e-mail address formatting rules, (column 5, lines 2-56).

In reference to claim 9, Tsuki discloses the method wherein the step of determining whether the identifier portion is consistent with one or more known e-

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mail address formatting rules further comprises: comparing the identifier portion to a list of known names (i.e. Figure 5, column 5, lines 5-21); identifying some or all the identifier portion as consistent with one or more known names (column 5, lines 5-21) ; determining whether the identifier portion is consistent with one or more known e-mail address formatting rules that are a function addressees' names (i.e. e-mail address of received e-mail, column 2, lines 16-23), (column 5, lines 22-56, column 7, lines 7-40).

In reference to claim 12, Tsuki discloses the method wherein the list of known names includes first names and last names (i.e. user names, Figure 5), and the step of comparing the identifier portion to a list of known names further comprises: comparing a first sub-portion (i.e. sub-domain, Figure 4) of the identifier portion to the list of known first names, (column 4, lines 42 to column 5, line 4); and comparing a second sub-portion (i.e. name, Figure 4) of the identifier portion to the list of known last names, (column 5, lines 5-59).

In reference to claim 13, Tsuki discloses the method wherein the first sub-portion is separated from the second sub-portion by a separator character, (i.e. ".", "@", column 4, lines 58-60 and column 5, lines 22-27).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

**Claims 2 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuki as applied to claim 1 above, in view of Teague (US Application Publication 2003/0225850), hereinafter referred to as Teague.**

In reference to claim 2, although Tsuki explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention, the reference does not disclose the method wherein the step of gathering e-mail address data further comprises the steps of: providing a domain registration interface to a party having authority for the domain name, the domain registration interface including an interface for indicating one or more e-mail address formatting rules associated with the domain name; and gathering the one or more e-mail address formatting rules associated with the domain name from the domain registration interface. However, these would have been obvious modifications to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Teague.

In an analogous art, Teague discloses a method for processing e-mails based on the rules associated with address format (i.e. address pattern, Table 1), of a domain (abstract and paragraph [0019], lines 1-10). Teague discloses the

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method further comprises providing a domain registration interface (Figure 6A-item 604) to a party having authority (i.e. administrative user) for the domain name, (paragraph [0130], lines 1-17), the domain registration interface including an interface (Figure 6B) for indicating one or more e-mail address formatting rules (i.e. domain configuration) associated with the domain name, (paragraph [0140], line 1 to paragraph [0142], line 16); and gathering the one or more e-mail address formatting rules associated with the domain name from the domain registration interface (i.e. administrator defined), (paragraph [0044], line 1 to paragraph [0046], line 22). These modifications to the method disclosed by Tsuki would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to support explicitly defining and updating rules for entire domains via a web-based administration facility, and thereby increasing user productivity (Teague paragraph [0019], lines 4-6).

In reference to claim 19, although Tsuki explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention, the reference does not disclose the method wherein the one or more known e-mail address formatting rules are from a list consisting of: last.first, first.last, alphanumeric only, LLLLLLFF, FFLLLLLL, FMLLLLLL, telephone number, punctuation required, minimum number of characters, or maximum number of characters. However, these would have been obvious modifications to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki, for

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one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Teague.

In an analogous art, Teague discloses a method for processing e-mails based on the rules associated with address format (i.e. address pattern, Table 1), of a domain (abstract and paragraph [0019], lines 1-10). Teague discloses the method further comprises determining the domain configuration via an administration interface, wherein the one or more known e-mail address formatting rules are from a list (i.e. possible entities) consisting of: last.first, first.last, alphanumeric only, LLLLLLFF, FLLLLLLL, FMLLLLLL, telephone number, punctuation required, minimum number of characters, or maximum number of characters (i.e. Figure 6C-item 612 and Figure 6D-item 620), (paragraph [0131], line 1 to paragraph [0132], line 17). These modifications to the method disclosed by Tsuki would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to support explicitly defining and updating rules for entire domains via a web-based administration facility, and thereby increasing user productivity (Teague paragraph [0019], lines 4-6).

**Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuki as applied to claim 1 above, in view of Tsuei (US Patent 6,654,779), hereinafter referred to as Tsuei.**

In reference to claim 3, Tsuki explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention specifically sorting registered (i.e. entered) email



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addresses by domain name, (column 1, lines 42-54 and column 2, lines 16-28). However, Tsuki is silent on the method comprising registering e-mail addresses pursuant to an e-mail forwarding service. Nonetheless, this would have been an obvious modification to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tsuei.

In an analogous art, Tsuei discloses a method for e-mail address change management (abstract). Tsuei further discloses that this method comprises registering e-mail addresses pursuant to an e-mail forwarding service, (column 2, lines 28-49 and column 6, lines 16-43). This modifications to the method disclosed by Tsuki would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to “facilitate delivery of e-mail when a person obtains a new address and his or her old e-mail address becomes invalid”, thereby increasing reliability for receiving intended e-mails, (Tsuei column 2, lines 60-63).

**Claims 4-6, 8, and 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuki as applied to claim 1 above, in view of Tafoya et al. (US Patent 6,829,607), hereinafter referred to as Tafoya.**

In reference to claim 4, although Tsuki explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention, the reference does not disclose the method wherein the step of gathering e-mail address data further comprises the steps of accessing public e-mail address listings, and storing e-mail addresses from the

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public e-mail address listings. Nonetheless, these would have been obvious modifications to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises dynamically creating an e-mail address resolution list via accessing public e-mail address listings (i.e. database mail store listings located on public servers, column 7, lines 21-64), and storing e-mail addresses from the public e-mail address listings, (column 7, line 65 to column 8, line 18). These modifications to the method as disclosed by Tsuki would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to employ a method that “not only utilizes email user’s entries, but also other known information that is not dependent on the entries to automatically resolve email address”, and thereby increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 2, lines 1-5 and column 4, lines 41-46).

In reference to claim 5, although Tsuki explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention, the reference does not disclose the method wherein the step of gathering e-mail address data further comprises the steps of gathering e-mail addresses from one or more e-mail address books.

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Nonetheless, this would have been an obvious modification to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises dynamically creating an e-mail address resolution list via gathering e-mail addresses from one or more e-mail address books, (column 7, lines 22-32). This modification to the method as disclosed by Tsuki would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to employ a method that “not only utilizes email user’s entries, but also other known information that is not dependent on the entries to automatically resolve email address”, and thereby increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 2, lines 1-5 and column 4, lines 41-46).

In reference to claim 6, Tsuki and Tafoya show the method wherein the step of gathering e-mail address from one or more e-mail address books further comprises performing address correction on the one or more e-mail address books (i.e. data store addresses) and informing an address-book owner of any corrections (i.e. resolution address entries) to be made on the one or more e-mail address books, (Tafoya Figure 5-item; column 13, lines 30-36).

In reference to claim 8, Tsuki explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention specifically the method wherein determining the e-mail address formatting rule further comprises: for a plurality of e-mail addresses having the same domain portion (i.e. top domain name, Figure 4) as the first e-mail address, (column 4, line 1-42) performing the steps of parsing a plurality of identifier portions (i.e. sub-address, Figure 4) of the plurality of e-mail address, (column 4, lines 44 to column 5, line 21); determining whether the plurality of identifier portions are consistent with known e-mail address formatting rules, (column 5, lines 2-56); and recording the known e-mail address formatting rules that are determined to be consistent with the plurality of identifier portions, (column 5, lines 22-59). However, the reference does not disclose the method counting a frequency at which particular known e-mail formatting rules were found to be consistent with the plurality of identifier portions, and selecting from the recorded known e-mail address formatting rules, the e-mail address formatting rule for the domain name, based on the counted frequency. Nonetheless, these would have been obvious modifications to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises determining the most likely e-address for resolution via counting a frequency of use associated with a particularly e-mail

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address, (column 7, line 65 to column 8, line 9 and column 8, lines 52-65) and subsequently selecting the most likely resolved e-mail address based on the counted frequency, (column 13, lines 11-17 and column 13, lines 45-64). These modifications to the method as disclosed by Tsuki would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 13, lines 13-17).

In reference to claim 20, Tsuki explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention specifically the method wherein the step of gathering e-mail address data corresponding to the domain name includes: gathering an e-mail address to whom a message is intended at the e-mail address, (i.e. e-mail address of received e-mail; column 2, lines 16-23) and the step of determining the e-mail address formatting rule based on the gathered e-mail address data further includes comparing the e-mail address to derive the e-mail address formatting rule, (column 5, lines 22-56). However, the reference does not disclose the method gathering addressee information about an addressee to whom a message is intended and comparing the addressee information to the e-mail address to derive the e-mail address formatting rule. Nonetheless, these would have been obvious modifications to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

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In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises method comprises dynamically creating an e-mail address resolution list via gathering addressee information (i.e. distribution list, contact information, friendly name) about an addressee to whom a message is intended, (column 7, lines 22-64) and comparing the addressee information to the e-mail address to derive the most likely e-mail address formatting rule (i.e. completion information). These modifications to the method as disclosed by Tsuki would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 13, lines 13-17).

In reference to claim 21, Tsuki and Tafoya show the method wherein the addressee information is a name of the addressee (i.e. friendly name, Tafoya column 7, lines 47-54).

In reference to claim 22, Tsuki and Tafoya show the method wherein the step of gathering e-mail address data includes gathering the addressee information from an address book, (Tafoya column 7, lines 22-55).

**Claims 14 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuki as applied to claim 1 above, in view of Hou et al. (US Patent 5,329,405), hereinafter referred to as Hou.**

In reference to claim 14, Tsuki explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention specifically the method wherein the identifier portion has a integer quantity of  $m$  characters (i.e. "character by character"; Figure 4; column 3, lines 59-63), and wherein the step of determining whether the identifier portion is consistent with one or more known e-mail address formatting rules further comprises: comparing the first characters of the identifier portion to a list of known names to determine whether the first characters of the identifier portion are consistent with the first characters in one or more names on the list of known names, (column 4, lines 42 to column 5, lines 27); identifying whether the one or more names which were found to be consistent with the first characters are first names or last names (i.e. name of user; Figure 5; and column 5, lines 5-39); and determining an identifier portion format (Figure 8) as having a beginning character group being in a first or last name, as identified (column 5, lines 33- 36 and column 7, lines 7-17). However the reference does not disclose the method wherein the identifier portion quantity of  $m$  characters is smaller than or equal to  $m$ ; for a particular value of  $n$ , recording whether the first  $n$  characters of the identifier portion are consistent with the first  $n$  characters of the one or more names on the list of known names; changing the value of  $n$ , but not to be greater than  $m$ , and repeating steps (a) and (b); and identifying values of  $n$  for which the

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identifier portion is consistent with the one or more names on the list of known names, including a maximum number of first characters for which the identifier portion is consistent with the one or more names on the list of known names; and determining a character group being up to the maximum number of characters. Nonetheless, this common character string matching algorithm was well known in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Hou. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to accordingly modify the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki.

In an analogous art, Hou discloses a method for matching characters of one data string against characters of another string, so as to find the longest matching string (abstract and column 2, lines 30-43). Hou further discloses the longest matching string method to comprise: a data string with a quantity of  $m$  characters (i.e. input string; Figure 8-item 40; column 4, lines 24-26), and an integer  $n$  (i.e. iteration number/compare cycle) that is smaller than or equal to  $m$  (column 2, lines 2, lines 58-59); for a particular value of  $n$  (i.e. length counter/match length; Figure 8-item 320) recording whether the first  $n$  characters of the data string are consistent with the first  $n$  characters of the one or more names (i.e. stored data string; Figure 8-item 48), (column 4, lines 24-46); changing the value of  $n$ , but not to be greater than  $m$ , and repeating steps (a) and (b) (i.e. iteration; column 2, lines 35-41; and column 4, lines 47-51); and identifying values of  $n$  for which the data string is consistent with the one or more stored data string, including a maximum number of first characters (i.e. longest



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match) for which the data string is consistent with the one or more stored data string, (column 2, lines 54-58 and column 4, lines 52-63); and determining a character group being up to the maximum number of characters, ( i.e. longest matching string; column 4, line 64 to column 5, line 10). These modifications to the method as disclosed by Tsuki would have been obvious, because one of ordinary skill in the art would have been so motivated to employ an established algorithm that “enables rapid and efficient variable length string matching”, (Hou column 3, lines 12-15).

In reference to claim 16, Tsuki and Hou show the method wherein the step of determining whether the identifier portion is consistent with one or more known e-mail address formatting rules further comprises: comparing a remainder group of characters (i.e. sub-domain name; Tsuki Figure 4), after the beginning character group, to the list of known names, (Tsuki column 4, lines 41-60); identifying whether the remainder group of characters is consistent with beginnings of one or more names from the list of known names (Tsuki column 4, line 61 to column 5, line 4); identifying characters of the remainder group which were found to be consistent with the beginnings of one or more names from the list of known names, and identifying whether the remainder group of characters is consistent with first or last names from the list of known names, (Tsuki column 5, lines 16-56) ;and determining the identifier portion format (Tsuki Figure 8) as having the remainder group having the characters comprising the beginning letters of first or last names, as identified , the remainder quantity of characters

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positioned after the beginning character group (i.e. user name), (Tsuki column 7, lines 7-25); and identifying a remainder maximum quantity of characters (i.e. longest match string, Hou column 2, lines 30-43).

**Claims 15 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuki in view of Hou as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Tafoya et al. (US Patent 6,829,607), hereinafter referred to as Tafoya.**

In reference to claim 15, Tsuki and Hou disclose substantial features of the claimed invention specifically the method further comprising the steps of: performing steps (a) through (f) for a plurality of e-mail addresses having the same domain portion (Tsuki column 5, lines 39-55); and determining a format rule for the domain including first or last name (Tsuki column 5, lines 16-56) and the maximum numbers of characters (i.e. longest match string, Hou column 2, lines 30-43). However, the references do not disclose determining the formatting rule for the domain name, based on a counted frequency. Nonetheless, this would have been an obvious modification to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki and Hou for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises determining the most likely e-address for

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resolution via counting a frequency of use associated with a particularly e-mail address, (column 7, line 65 to column 8, line 9 and column 8, lines 52-65) and subsequently selecting the most likely resolved e-mail address based on the counted frequency, (column 13, lines 11-17 and column 13, lines 45-64). This modification to the method as disclosed by Tsuki and Hou would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 13, lines 13-17).

In reference to claim 17, although Tsuki and Hou show substantial features of the claimed invention, the references do not disclose the method wherein the step of determining the identifier portion format further includes choosing the identifier portion format for the beginning character group and the remainder group such that they do not both correspond to a same name type, the same name type being last name or first name. Nonetheless, this would have been an obvious modification to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki and Hou, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises choosing the e-mail format rule (i.e.

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resolution list) so that they do not correspond to a same name type (i.e. identical email addresses or contacts), (column 9, lines 27-39). This modification to the method as disclosed by Tsuki and Hou would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to eliminate duplicate email address entries so as to increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 13, lines 13-17).

In reference to claim 18, Tsuki and Hou disclose substantial features of the claimed invention specifically the method further comprising the steps of: performing steps (a) through (k) for a plurality of e-mail addresses having the same domain portion (Tsuki column 5, lines 39-55); and determining a format rule for the domain including those of beginning character groups and remainder groups for the plurality of e-mail addresses, (Tsuki column 5, lines 16-56 and column 7, lines 7-25). However, the references do not disclose determining the formatting rule for the domain name, based on a counted frequency of identifier portion formats. Nonetheless, this would have been an obvious modification to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsuki and Hou for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises determining the most likely e-address for

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resolution via counting a frequency of use associated with a particularly e-mail address, (column 7, line 65 to column 8, line 9 and column 8, lines 52-65) and subsequently selecting the most likely resolved e-mail address based on the counted frequency, (column 13, lines 11-17 and column 13, lines 45-64). This modification to the method as disclosed by Tsuki and Hou would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 13, lines 13-17).

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 10 and 11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The aforementioned claims describe a unique method for determining e-mail address formatting rules through the application of probability assigned to a gathered list of known names and a probability assigned to the previously determined e-mail address format rules. Applicable prior art discloses determining e-mail address formats through employing a probability (i.e. weight) based on frequency, but only as applied to entries of an e-mail address resolution list. As a result, the aforementioned claims indicate a non-obvious methodology over the prior art.


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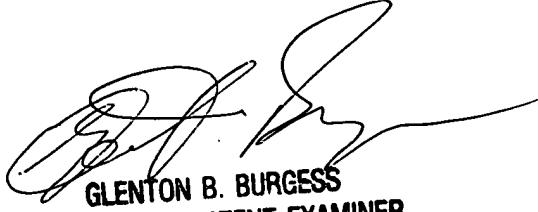
**Conclusion**

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LaShanya R Nash whose telephone number is (571) 272-3957. The examiner can normally be reached on 9am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenton Burgess can be reached on (571) 272-3949. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LaShanya Nash   
Art Unit, 2153  
March 15, 2005

  
GLENTON B. BURGESS  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100